SQUEASE™

www.squeasewear.com

The inflatable deep pressure vest

User manual

INTRODUCTION

Dear Squease user,

Thank you for choosing a Squease pressure vest.

The Squease pressure vest is easy to use but before you start, it is important to read this user manual carefully. To get the most out of your garment, please follow the recommendations and instructions set out in this manual, and use the accompanying Evaluation Booklet to help you monitor and evaluate the beneficial effect of the pressure vest with your day-to-day challenges.

Share your experience of using the vest with us and other users by sending us a copy of your filled out Evaluation Booklet together with any other comments or questions by email to info@squeasewear.com. Go to www.squeasewear.com to read testimonials from other users and for further information.

We look forward to hearing from you.
Have fun with your pressure vest!

The Squease team

IMPORTANT NOTE

If you have any doubts about, or are new to, deep pressure, we recommend that you consult an Occupational Therapist (OT) or medical professional familiar with deep pressure and Sensory Integration (SI) before you start using the pressure vest.
If you have any medical or physical conditions, which may be adversely affected by the application of pressure, it is advisable to check with your doctor before using the vest.

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'Everyone knows the story of the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back. Thanks to the vest, Willem can prevent the camel's back from breaking in situations of increasing stress and sensory overload. He now has a way to take some weight off the camel's back, which helps prevent a lot of frustration and anxiety every day.'

- Willem's mom

Read more stories from Squease users on www.squeasewear.com

At school, I am now able to carry out tasks that I would otherwise not have dared to do, and I can complete them successfully!

The vest makes me feel less stressed when doing schoolwork.'

- Chris

'The deep pressure helps to relieve my anxiety. I have worn the garment whilst driving my car (always a very stressful activity), which resulted in me being very relaxed.
I inflate the vest a couple of times per day for around 20 minutes at the time. After 10 minutes, I start to calm down and enjoy wearing the vest for just a little longer.'

- Marije

PRIOR TO USING THE SQUEASE PRESSURE VEST

Deep pressure - improve sensory integration

When inflated the vest becomes tighter and applies a firm pressure. Deep pressure can have the effect of giving you a safe and secure feeling. For individuals with sensory issues, the use of deep pressure on the muscles and joints can help improve sensory processing and integration. Deep pressure has a regulating effect. It can calm and soothe an over-stimulated, disorganised or 'fearful' nervous system and can increase alertness and focus in an under-stimulated nervous system.

Daily challenges which can be alleviated by use of your pressure vest

Your Squease vest can help you to regulate responses to the challenges of every day life. For example, in situations where you are:

1. over-stimulated (e.g. when feeling stressed, anxious or frustrated), deep pressure can help you feel calm and recover to a balanced emotional state more quickly.
2. experiencing rising tension, applying deep pressure, prior to or during the trigger event can help you to prevent the resulting overstimulation.
3. under-stimulated (e.g. responses such as low concentration or engagement), deep pressure can help you to feel more alert and able to focus.

Specific examples of scenarios in which the Squease pressure vest can help you

Your Squease pressure vest can be used to counter negative responses in a variety of everyday scenarios and help you to:

- Feel calmer and recover more quickly from overstimulation, stress, or anxiety
- Deal with rising tension or frustration (e.g. triggered by waiting, preparing for or wanting to finish an activity, having disagreements or accommodating unexpected changes)
- Reduce complex behaviour (e.g. shut-down, aggression, tantrum or self-injury)
- Fall asleep and/or stay asleep
- Improve body awareness and postural imbalances
- Reduce distractibility, resulting in improved concentration and ability to follow instructions and complete tasks independently
- Make transitions between activities
- Be more comfortable in stimulus-rich environments such as supermarkets, at a birthday party, taking public transport, in a group or busy corridor
- Participate in social situations such as group discussions or meetings
- Feel safer and more comfortable and secure in general

The soothing and comforting effects that are experienced when using your pressure vests may also improve mood and make you feel happier.

For first-hand stories from users of how the pressure vest helped them, please refer to the testimonials in this manual on pages [4] and [12]. You can find more examples of feedback from users by visiting www.squeasewear.com, and of course, we would love you to contribute any insight gained by your own experience of using the vest.

Stories from Squease users on www.squeasewear.com

USING THE SQUEASE PRESSURE VEST

Introducing the pressure vest

Take your time in getting used to wearing the vest and the experience of pressure on your upper body when the vest is inflated. Start off by wearing and practising inflating and deflating the vest several times when you are relaxed and comfortable before using it in a situation that you may find more challenging.

The fully inflated pressure vest may act as a strong stimulus.
Users who respond strongly to deep pressure are advised to start with a low level of pressure (inflation) and to gradually increase the amount of stimulation over time until an optimal level of pressure (inflation) is found. Users who prefer high levels of pressure stimulation may like to inflate and deflate their vests several times before leaving it inflated for a longer period. We have observed this behaviour in many users and recognise that it can help with self-regulation.

Recommended duration of inflation

For best results inflate the pressure vest for up to 20 minutes at a time and then deflate it for a minimum of 20 minutes before inflating it again.

This will prevent your body from becoming desensitized to the pressure. By alternating between periods of inflation and deflation, you will ensure that your body experiences a similar response to deep pressure each time.

20 minutes of inflation is a guideline based on observations made by Occupation Therapists, but you may prefer to have the pressure applied for shorter or longer periods of time. Experiment with the duration of applying pressure to determine an optimal length of time for you.

If you find that you want to keep your vest inflated for longer than 20 minutes - for example for the duration of a longer stress-inducing activity - you will not experience any harm in keeping the vest inflated for a longer period.

The continuous effect of deep pressure

The regulating effect of deep pressure will last for up to 2 hours after the vest has been deflated. On days when you face many stressful moments, we recommend you inflate the vest at 2 hour intervals, for approximately 20 minutes each time, irrespective of your stress levels at those times. This will reduce the likelihood and severity of overloading your sensory system during the two-hour period.

Note that if you are using your vest as in accordance with the paragraph above, you can also inflate the pressure vest in response to additional stress triggers in the 2 hours between inflation.

Wearing the vest all day compared to on a 'when required' basis

The pressure vest can be worn all day in a deflated state making it very convenient to apply pressure when needed. However, wearing the vest in hot weather may make you feel uncomfortably warm and in this scenario we recommend you switch to wearing it when required.

Introducing the vest - when supporting a user

If you are supporting a user, introduce the vest when they are relaxed and give them plenty of time to become used to wearing it in a deflated state. Gently inflate the vest to apply low level of pressure only when you think the user has become familiar with it. Monitor their response as you increase the pressure, gradually building up to a desired level.

Once you are confident that the user has become accustomed to the pressure of the vest in relaxed settings, you can then introduce its use in moments of rising tension, stress or anxiety.

Inflating and deflating the vest - when supporting a user

The support required when assisting someone with their use of the vest will, of course, differ from person to person. Depending on an individual's ability to communicate and understand their own needs, as well as their ability to take action.

For example, a user may or may not be able to:

- understand their own stress triggers;
- understand the relief provided by the Squease deep pressure;
- indicate to you when they would like to feel deep pressure; or
- independently inflate and/or deflate the vest when they require it,

In all cases, we recommend that you work on the user initiating the use of the pressure vest as much as possible. Even if that involves no more than assisting them or encouraging them, to operate the hand pump independently. This is to help to give the user a sense of being in control and to help them make the link between deep pressure relief and their needs.

Image or picto of the pressure vest

If the pressure vest is not worn all day, build in the possibility for the user to ask for the vest, for example by pointing to the vest, or an image or picto of the pressure vest. You can download an image or picto of the pressure vest at www.squeasewear.com or send us a request via info@squeasewear.com and we will send one to you.

Image and picto's of the Squease deep pressure vest

EVALUATING THE EFFECT OF THE SQUEASE PRESSURE VEST

Starting out – picking challenges to target with your Squease pressure vest

Use the Evaluation Booklet to help monitor progress with your pressure vest. This booklet will help you to identify some of the challenging scenarios, in which the effectiveness of the Squease pressure vest can be evaluated, noting symptoms in the month before using the vest and then, while or after using the vest. A list of challenges that are commonly found is provided in the booklet for you to select from and you can add any others that you wish to monitor.

We recommend selecting no more than a couple of challenges when you first start to use the vest and to work on establishing a routine of using the vest for an extended period of time, rather than trying to use the vest to deal with all of your challenges from the start. This will help you to assess the impact of the vest on the negative responses or symptoms you experience during those challenges more accurately.

Once you become more comfortable using the vest and you understand the ways in which you best respond to the pressure provided by the vest you can introduce its use at different times of the day and with more challenges.

Every user is unique - determining when you will use your vest

After you have read this manual, use the Evaluation Booklet to plan when you could use your vest to best effect. Consider your most challenging situations and how you might introduce the vest so you are prepared for when these occur.

The vest should be inflated when you feel a need for deep pressure. Some users will prefer to inflate the vest in circumstances where they tend to feel, under- or over-stimulated. Other users find that they have a constant need for pressure and such users benefit most when the vest is inflated at predetermined times throughout the day. Experiment with your vest to find what works best for you.

Using the pressure vest can be:
1] Time related: the vest is used (inflated) during a certain time period
2] Activity related: the vest is used (inflated) during certain activities
3] Arousal level related: the vest is used (inflated) when feeling over- or under-stimulated, or any combination of the above that best suits your needs.

Examples are shown in the table below. Also read the stories on pages [4] and [12] in this manual and the testimonials on www.squeasewear.com to gain insight in when others use the pressure vest.

When will the vest be worn?	When will the vest be inflated?	How long will the vest be inflated for?
E.g. Time related: From 2pm - 8pm	Every 2 hours	For 20 minutes
E.g. Activity related: In the classroom	To pay attention to the teacher and complete classroom-based work	From start to finish of the activity
E.g. Arousal level related: When over-stimulated	When over-stimulated, stressed or anxious	For up to 20 minutes or until calm

Create your own plan in the table provided in the Evaluation Booklet. Note any modifications to your plan as you go along. Please experiment with care - changes to your plan should be gradual and your primary goal should be consistent use over time.

For best results, ensure that everyone in your support group – including parents, therapists, support workers and teachers - are aware of the plan. Let each person in your support network see and if possible try the vest on themselves. Make sure that everyone has a clear understanding of where the vest is to be stored when you are not wearing it and when, and how it is to be used.

Evaluate the use of the vest with the help of the Evaluation Booklet

Use the accompanying Evaluation Booklet to score the challenges you selected to target, both before the first use of the vest, and after using the pressure vest for several weeks: the evaluation period. Complete the analysis sections to help assess the differences brought about by the Squease pressure vest.

Please email a copy of your Evaluation Booklet as well as your stories, questions and feedback to info@squeasewear.com.

'I think you have a product that could help many people on the autism spectrum.'

- Dr. Temple Grandin

Read more stories from Squease users on www.squeasewear.com

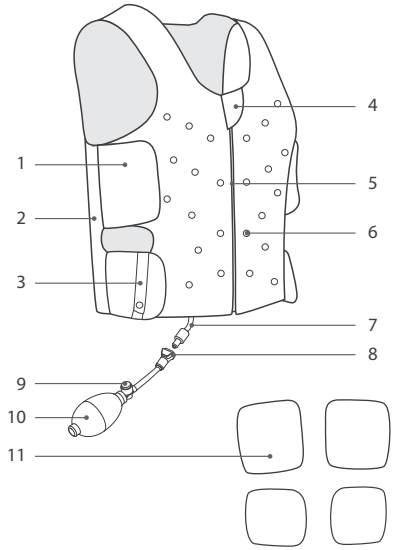
'My mom was angry with me, so I put on my vest and that made me feel calm.
Not happy, but calm. Then I talked with mom and all was OK again.'

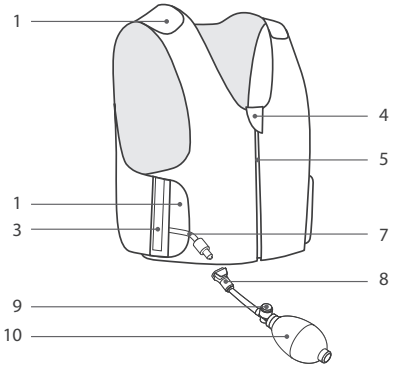
- Bart

'I love it - I feel like there's a force field around me. I'm 'living' in my Squease and really enjoying its benefits. In a shopping centre or going for a plane - anything where there's lots of noise or chaos, I really value the Squease.'

- Dr. Wendy Lawson

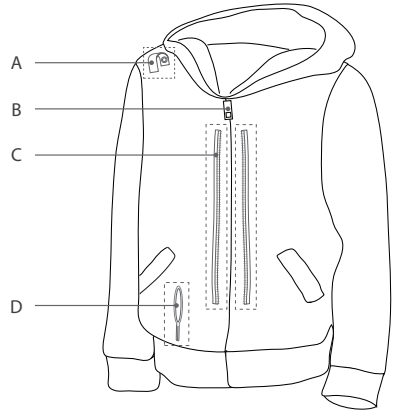
PRODUCT FEATURES





Squease deep pressure vest

1 Velcro side and shoulder straps
2 Elastic parts
3 Brand label and care instructions
4 Zip cover
5 Zip
6 Ventilation holes
7 Air tubing
8 Quick release valve
9 Air release button
10 Hand pump
11 Extension straps



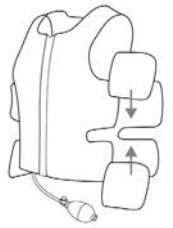
Squease hooded top

A [Inside] Shoulder loops with popper buttons
B Main zip
C [Inside] Zips to secure deep pressure vest to top
D [Inside] Pocket slot for hand pump

HOW TO SET UP AND USE YOUR SQUEASE PRESSURE VEST

Putting on your vest

For comfort, we recommend that you wear your Squease pressure vest over a thin t-shirt. To get the right fit and best results, set up your Squease pressure vest whilst standing. Put on the vest and fully zip it up. Place the zipper under the zip cover to prevent any irritation on the skin. Check that the vest is fully deflated before setting the side straps.



Velcro extension straps

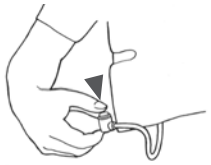
If you need to widen the vest, the four velcro extension straps can be easily attached to the velcro side straps. The two larger extension straps attach to the upper side straps, and the two smaller extension straps attach to the lower side straps.

Inflating the vest

Inflate the vest by repeatedly squeezing the hand pump until you feel a comfortable, firm pressure.

Safety valve

For the safety of the user, the hand pump has a built-in valve, which limits the maximum pressure level of the vest. The Squease kids vests have a second safety valve which releases over-pressure.



Deflating the vest

Deflate the vest by holding down the air release button on the hand pump. The pressure can also be released at any time by unzipping the vest or unfastening the velcro straps.

Setting up your vest using the velcro straps

Start with setting all velcro straps at the widest setting.

If your vest has velcro shoulder straps, pull down the vest, fasten the side straps, inflate the vest and adjust the shoulder straps for best fit.

If your vest has two side straps, pull down the vest and fasten the upper straps before the lower straps.

To find the best fit, check that:

- the vest fits loosely around your torso when fully deflated. Leave a gap of two to three finger-widths between your body and the deflated vest. This will give you a good starting point.
- the velcro side straps are similarly attached on both sides for a symmetrical fit,
- the velcro hooks are fully covered, and
- the vest provides you with a comfortable, firm deep pressure when inflated.

Setting up the pressure vest for someone else

If you are supporting a user, who is unable to express their preferred pressure level, leave a gap of two to three finger widths between their body and the deflated vest. Always pay attention to the reaction of the user whilst inflating the vest. If the user appears to respond negatively, we recommend that the people who are involved in the care of the user – including parents, therapists and support workers - evaluate whether to continue with the use of the vest or try again at a later date.

Finding the best fit for comfortable, deep pressure

Inflate the vest until you feel a comfortable pressure on your upper body. The amount of pressure that feels comfortable will depend on your sensitivity to pressure and you should take time to find this level and ensure that you are not inflating the vest beyond what is comfortable for you.

If you have fully inflated the vest and you find that you want to feel more pressure, fully deflate the vest undo the side straps and refasten them for a closer fit around your body. On the other hand, if you find the vest is applying too much pressure when inflated, fully deflate it and refasten the side straps for a looser fit. Repeat this process until you are happy with the fit. Now your Squease pressure vest is set up and ready to use. With the straps set you can use the zip to put on and take off the vest and change the level of pressure you desire using the hand pump.

Wearing the pressure vest inside out

The special zipper enables you to wear the pressure vest inside out. This may be more comfortable for you if you need the velcro straps to be tightly fastened. Turning the vest inside out will prevent the straps from sticking out, but note that the hand pump will then be switched to the left hand side.

Attaching your pressure vest to a Squease hooded top
(currently only for vests without velcro shoulder straps)

The vest zips into a Squease hooded top so that you can wear them together as a single garment. Before doing this, you should set up the pressure vest in accordance with the instructions on pages [14-15]. Once you are happy with the fit of your vest:

- tighten the velcro side straps by an additional 2cm on each side,
- use the inside zips and shoulder loops of the hooded top to attach it to the vest, and
- feed the hand pump through the pocket slot on the inside of the hooded top and place it in the front pocket for easy access.

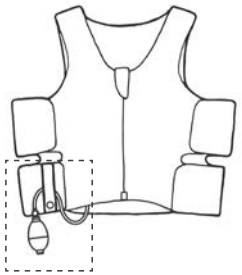
What else can you wear over the pressure vest?

You are free to wear any garment over your pressure vest. The discrete, compact design of the vest means that even when it is inflated, it will be barely visible if you wear it under a sweater or hooded top.

Our Squease hooded top is designed to allow the hand pump to fit conveniently in the front pocket. If you wish to wear your vest under another top with front pockets and would like to place the hand pump in its pocket, you can make your own hole on the inside of the pocket. Either make:

- a small hole, to feed the air tubing through, or
- a larger hole, to feed the hand pump through without disconnecting it.

Positioning your hand pump

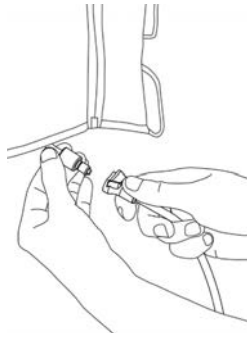


The hand pump can be positioned ready to use in the following ways:

- in the front pocket of your Squease hooded top (or another top following the instructions on the left),
- tucked in the pocket of your trousers or shorts,
- held up on your vest by tucking the air tubing under the Squease label and fastening the popper button.

If, under strain, the air tubing is pulled loose from the vest, you can reattach it to the connector at the bottom of the vest. Should you wish to reduce the length of the air tubing permanently, you may cut the air tubing with scissors to your preferred length.

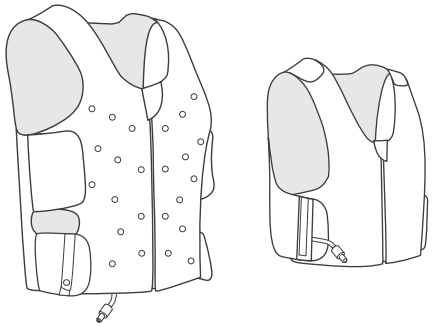
Removing the hand pump



To remove the hand pump after inflating the vest, fully depress the push button on the quick release socket and pull. The vest will remain inflated! To inflate or deflate the vest, reconnect the quick release socket by pushing it firmly over the plug until you hear a 'click'. The vest can be inflated or deflated as per the instructions on page [14]. If you are unable to reconnect the quick release socket, ensure the push button is depressed fully and then try to connect it again.

If your Squease pressure vest has not yet been supplied with a quick release valve, please follow the assembly instructions in the manual provided with it.

CARE INSTRUCTIONS



Squease deep pressure vest

The pressure vest can be wiped with a damp cloth or hand washed with mild soap in cold-lukewarm water. Air-dry in a shaded place. Before you start cleaning your vest, disconnect the hand pump with the quick release valve, so that no water can accidentally get into the vest.

DO NOT machine wash or tumble dry.
DO NOT wash with detergent, solvents or hot water.
DO NOT dry clean or iron.
DO NOT hang garment on radiators, expose to flame or use artificial heat to dry.
DO NOT stitch through or make alterations to the pressure vest.
DO NOT sew, stitch or mend. Keep away from sharp objects.

Squease hooded top

Before you wash you hooded top, detach your pressure vest from the hooded top and empty the pockets. Wash inside out with similar colours on a delicate machine wash cycle with the water temperature not exceeding 30 degrees. Air-dry in a shaded place.

DO NOT bleach.
DO NOT tumble dry.

Hand pump and air tubing
The pump and air tubing can be wiped clean with micro fibre cloth.
Do not submerge the pump in water.

Extension straps
The extension straps can be wiped with a damp cloth or hand washed with mild soap in cold-lukewarm water. Air-dry in a shaded place.

! DO NOT inflate the pressure vest with any device other than pumps supplied by Squease Ltd.

This document

Great care was taken in preparing this manual. Constant product development may mean that some information is not entirely up to date. The information in this document is subject to change without notice.

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This manual has been prepared with the cooperation of:

Monique Thoonsen - *Physiotherapist, SI therapist, pedagogue*

Robert de Hoog - *Physiotherapist, SI therapist, employee Squease*

When you have comments or suggestions, please let us know via info@squeasewear.com

Declaration of Conformity

We, Squease Ltd
of CEME Innovation Centre, Rainham, RM13 8EU, United Kingdom
certify that the products

Squease Deep Pressure vest
DPV- A 152-166
DPV- B 164-178
DPV- C 176-192
DPV- XXS 110-134
DPV- XS 128-152

are in conformity with the applicable provisions of the European Communities Council Directive 93/42/EEC as amended by 2007/47/EC concerning medical devices.

CE

Andrew Brand

Technical Director
May 2013

SQUEASE™

www.squeasewear.com
info@squeasewear.com

facebook.com/squease
@squeaseUK

Squease Ltd.
CEME Innovation Centre
Marsh Way Rainham
Essex RM13 8EU
United Kingdom

Squease Ltd.
Torenallee 32-04
5617 BD Eindhoven
Nederland

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